How School Professionals Can Support Healthy Relationships

Webinar Presenters: Lisa Sohn and Eleanor Davis
Webinar Date: February 6, 2018

Learning outcomes:

• Identify healthy and unhealthy relationship behaviors in young adolescents
• Help young people navigate online and offline relationships with peers
• Utilize everyday gestures that promote trauma-informed relationships with students
How many middle school youth (11-13 year olds) have said they are in / have been in a romantic relationship in the past year?

**POP QUIZ**

- **51%** of 7th graders reported currently being in a romantic relationship
- **72%** of 8th and 9th graders reported “dating”

How many youth (17 and under) have been exposed to violence in their home, community or school?

- **58%**

**How this impacts students:**

Students experiencing trauma or violence:

- are two-and-one-half times more likely to fail a grade;
- score lower on standardized achievement test scores;
- have more receptive or expressive language difficulties;
- are suspended or expelled more often; and
- are designated to special education more frequently.

*(Wolpow & Kincaid 2011)*
Teen Dating Violence: What Adult Allies* Need to Know

TOP 5!

1. It is far too common...

   • One in three adolescents in the US is a victim of physical, sexual, emotional, or verbal abuse from a dating partner. This is way higher than rates of other types of violence that affect youth.

   ...and it starts early.

   • Violent behavior typically begins between the ages of 12 and 18
   • Girls and young women between the ages of 16 and 24 experience the highest rate of IPV ... almost triple the national average.
2. Understanding the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationship behaviors can be tricky.

What is an Unhealthy Relationship?

- Partner shames you or makes you feel stupid
- Pressures you to do something you’re not ready to do
- Tries to control you (how you dress, where you go, what you do)
- Threatens or scares you / makes you feel afraid if you don’t do what they want
- Sends tons of text messages, asks for your online passwords, pressures you to send them nude or sexy pics
- Partner keeps tabs on you (via GPS location, constantly texting you about where you are, who you’re with, etc.)
What is a Healthy Relationship*?

*Many young people don’t know!

- Partner makes you feel safe and comfortable
- Doesn’t pressure you
- Respects your boundaries (sexual and other)
- Gives you space to hang out with and privacy -- online
- Supportive and respectful
- Open and honest communication

If you feel safe, respected, and happy, you are likely in a healthy relationship.

3. Technology plays a prominent role.

25% of dating teens report that they’ve experienced abuse online or through technology (e.g. via phones or social media)
Digital Dating Abuse:

When someone repeatedly controls, pressures, or threatens someone they’re seeing or dating through their phone or online.

- PRIVACY
- PRESSURE
- CONTROL

4. It’s more serious than you think.

52% of TEENS WHO EXPERIENCE DIGITAL ABUSE are also PHYSICALLY ABUSED
5. Teens feel alone.

That's Not Cool is a community of youth leaders & adult allies organizing to prevent Digital Dating Abuse & Teen Dating Violence.
That’s Not Cool empowers young people to identify and prevent abuse both online and offline.

- **Educate**
  - Resources to learn, ask questions
  - Help teens identify abuse

- **Organize**
  - Help teens prevent abuse
  - Support young people to take action to change school culture and relationship norms

- **Youth-Driven Violence Prevention**
  - Promote youth leadership & empowerment
  - Foster youth-adult partnerships
  - Raise up youth voices

**WHAT CAN YOU DO?**

Adult Allies Resource Center on ThatsNotCool.com

Healthy Relationships Safety card

Teach media literacy and examining the social norms that surround teens
### Sound Relationships Nutrition Label

#### Nutritional Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount per serving:</th>
<th>Present (%)</th>
<th>Intensity level P-10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unhealthy Relationship Ingredients</td>
<td>Drama</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possession</td>
<td>Crazy! This video shows one or both partners constantly calling, checking on, thinking about, or trying to control the other person, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disrespect</td>
<td>No way! This video shows one or both partners treating with other people, cheating, touching inappropriately, aging, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship – age</td>
<td>Uh! This video takes place mostly in the bedroom, shows one or both partners with very few clothes, focuses primarily on the physical parts of the relationship, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulation</td>
<td>What? This video shows one partner buying/giving gifts in order to get what he/she wants, using alcohol to get sex, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### True View

#### Unhealthy Views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unhealthy Views</th>
<th>0-5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>Visual: This video shows one or both partners doing a lot of making up/breaking up, yelling, destroying property, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possession</td>
<td>Crazy! This video shows one or both partners constantly calling, checking on, thinking about, or trying to control the other person, etc.</td>
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#### Healthy Views

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<th>Healthy Views</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fun/Enjoyable</td>
<td>Amuse! This video shows both partners laughing, smiling, doing activities together, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>This video shows both partners comforting each other, watching/laughing together, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>Yay! This video shows both partners talking and listening to each other, helping one another, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality</td>
<td>Great! This video shows both partners making decisions together, sharing decision-making around sex, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>Wow! This video shows both partners sharing secrets, looking each other directly in the eyes, hanging out with other friends, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Total Unhealthy Views

#### Total Healthy Views
Perpetrators and victims of teen dating violence so often have other violence in their lives, as child witnesses or victims.
The #1 factor in helping children heal from trauma is the presence of a caring, consistent adult.
Childhood Trauma
Changing minds.

WITNESSING VIOLENCE CAN CHANGE A KID’S MIND.

YOU CAN HELP THEM HEAL.

New research shows that witnessing traumatic events—like domestic violence, shootings, or even fighting—can physically damage a child’s brain. But the damage can be undone. This site will teach you about the science of childhood trauma, and how your everyday actions can make a world of difference.

LEARN THE HEALING GESTURES

GESTURES THAT CAN HEAL

As a caregiver, caring adult in a child’s life, your relationship with them could be the most important factor in helping them overcome trauma. Here’s what you can do.

CELEBRATE

Use “praise” not “put-downs.”

READ MORE

COMFORT

Stay calm and patient.

COLLABORATE

Ask for their opinions.

LISTEN

Show an interest in their passions.

INSPIRE

Encourage them to live their dreams.

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DEFENDING CHILDHOOD

2/6/2018
5 Everyday Gestures That Heal

**Comfort**
- “I care about you and I’m here to help.”
- “Are you feeling nervous or anxious about something?”

**Listen**
- “What do you remember about what happened?”
- “Tell me how things are going at school.”

**Inspire**
- “You can do this ... I believe in you!”
- “You are a great role model for other students.”

**Collaborate**
- “Let’s work together to come up with a plan to help you...”
- “What can I do to help you right now?”

**Celebrate**
- “I am proud of your hard work. Congratulations!”
- “You are courageous and brave”

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**Practical tips to make your environment trauma-sensitive**

- **Dull harsh Lighting:** Try using lamps or covered overhead fluorescents.
- **Stifle slamming doors:** Use door stops and consider how covered windows or screens may serve the same purpose.
- **Reduce Noise:** Rugs and other noise-absorbing fabrics can help reduce and muffle hectic noise from outside or out in the halls.
- **Warn of bells and loudspeakers:** Advance notice of jarring sounds may help students prepare for them and avoid being startled or triggered.
- **Use activities as outlets:** Let kids throw a ball inside a box or crumple up paper and throw it in the trash.
- **Careful of unwelcome or unexpected touch:** Ask permission or give warning before physically touching a student.
You Can’t Do This Alone

A healthy workplace and a Whole School Approach give you the structural support to see each interaction with a student through a trauma-informed lens.

 Seek Support

To whom do you turn for support? Who are your allies? Create a community of colleagues around you to vent or share successes, lessons learned and tough days.
Don’t Forget to Celebrate Wins
When a child has an emotional or behavioral breakthrough, it’s a party.
Don’t forget to celebrate your own accomplishments!

Changing Minds
Childhood Trauma
Online Module

www.ChangingMindsNow.org/e-learning
3 Things You Can Do Today

1. Go to www.ThatsNotCool.com to learn more about Teen Dating Abuse, Digital Abuse and to check out our resources for adult allies.

2. Go to www.ChangingMindsNow.org to download tools you can use in your work, and learn more about helping kids heal from trauma.

3. Give yourself a pat on the back.

Thank you!

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That’s Not Cool
@thatsnotcool

www.ChangingMindsNow.org